

Captains' Leadership Curriculum: "Areas of Challenge"

Participant Guide

Session 3; _____



What Did I Learn in the NIC Learning Center?

Take a moment and reflect on the NIC Learning Center e-course that you took based on your competency challenge. Please respond to the questions below.

Name the course that you took (if you took more than one, just report on your favorite or the one that you felt you learned the most from.)

Describe your general feeling about the course.

Cite one new learning experience that you got from the course.

The Action Learning Plan

The Action Learning Plan (ALP) is the mechanism that will assist you in the implementation of your leadership development. Use this framework and the steps below to craft and implement your ALP.

Preparation

Reflect on your *360 Manager Core Competency Index Profile*, and review the chapters from the *Correctional Leadership Competencies for the 21st Century: Manager and Supervisor Level Leader* that pertain to your identified competency *strength* and *challenge* (Pre-Course Assignment). *Review and reflect* on your learning from the course that you took from the NIC Learning Center (Intercession Assignment). Make some notes on your reflections below.

Learning Objective

Focus on 1-2 areas that you plan to develop from the assessment data by creating a Learning Objective for yourself. The objective should include the behavior you wish to use, who you will use the behavior on/with, and the measure you will use to determine success. Practice writing “behavioral, measurable objectives below.

Action Steps

Now begin considering what action steps you will take on your plan. Sequence these steps in a logical fashion that will most effectively assist you in meeting your objective.

Feedback

Identify the type of indicators that will tell you you're successful, or where you need to continue to focus and practice.

Debrief

Identify the possible obstacles that may get in your way and some resources you will need to procure to accomplish the steps in your plan.

Please note that an Action Learning Plan form is attached at the end of this section for your use in developing your ALP.

Case of Tommy Z: Developing an Action Learning Plan

Let's take a look at Tommy Z's profile.

- Newly appointed Captain
- Lowest scores in Team Building
- E-Courses taken,
 - "An Essential Guide to Giving Feedback"
 - "Giving Feedback: A Manager's Guide"
- Tommy generally believes staff should know what to do and how to do it. He shouldn't have to get involved unless something goes wrong; then he has to go in and "fix it". Colleagues at his previous facility have characterized him as not being as communicative as needed. He wants to improve his team building skill set by practicing giving effective feedback to staff at appropriate times.

What possible insights could you draw from just this information?

Case of Tommy Z: Developing an Action Learning Plan

Now let's walk through the development of an Action Learning Plan for Tommy Z.
Record some possible responses as we walk through the development of Tommy's plan.

What should Tommy do first in his preparation to build his ALP? Describe.

What could be Tommy's learning objective?

Think about;

- What behavior/skill is he going to use?
- Who will he do it with?
- How will he know how he did?

What are the simple steps he would have to go through to implement his plan?

What are some possible ways that Tommy could get feedback? What feedback will tell him how successful he has been?

How would Tommy debrief the practice and implementation of his plan with a coaching peer? What kinds of questions and issues would he address?

Peer Coaching Breakout Task

You will now be assigned to a Breakout group. The purpose of the exercise is to begin thinking of how you will develop your ALP using your peers as coaches. Use the following steps/directions during your breakout session.

For each member of your group

Discuss/recommend 1 or 2 ways you can implement/use your new skill/competency.

Recommend some performance indicators that will help you assess the effectiveness of your leadership behavior.

Who will give you feedback on your leadership performance using this skill set?
Subordinates? Peers? Superiors?

Intersession Assignment

(to be completed between the 3rd class and videoconference Session #4)

Plan

Using the Action Learning Plan (ALP) Form presented during Session 2, create your own ALP.

IMPORTANT- Remember, this is a small discreet leadership experience. Plan your ALP to reflect just a small action step you are willing to try with staff to give you some feedback/indicators on the impact of your new behavior. The project/task you undertake should be something relatively simple and something that can be implemented during the next 30-45 days (before Session 3).

Implement

Implement your ALP with appropriate staff.

Gather some preliminary feedback from staff on the effectiveness of your leadership during the task/activity. This feedback can be in written form or could be retrieved anecdotally from verbal feedback and comments from staff.

IMPORTANT – Remember, feedback does not only have to come just from direct reports (subordinates). Others are impacted by your leadership as well. Depending on the skill set you employed and the task involved in your ALP, you may find feedback from a peer or even a superior to be very enlightening.

Report

Come to a third Session prepared to give a brief report (5 minutes maximum) on your experience implementing your ALP.

Your oral report should cover:

- Why you chose the task/activity you implemented
- How you felt after implementing/trying your new skill set
- What others reported to you about your leadership behavior
- What you consider your next step with this skill set in unleashing your leadership competency potential

It is expected you will create 1-3 PowerPoint slides to support your comments during your report. If you would prefer to submit a 1 page Briefing Sheet instead of creating the slides, that is also acceptable.

Action Learning Plan

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To be filled out and e-mailed to Bernie Iszler biszler@bop.gov

The *Action Learning Plan* (ALP) is a structured, short-term learning strategy that will enable you to take your learning to the application and behavioral level. Below is a 5-step process to develop and implement this short-term applied activity.

1. **PREPARATION:** To prepare for your ALP, you should reflect back on your *360 Manager Core Competency Index Profile*, and review the chapters from the *Correctional Leadership Competencies for the 21st Century: Manager and Supervisor Levels* that pertain to your identified competency *strength* and *challenge* (Pre-Course Assignment). *Review* and *reflect* on your learning from the course that you took from the NIC Learning Center (Intersession Assignment).
2. **LEARNING OBJECTIVE:** *Identify* and *write* a short-term (within 30 days) behavioral action learning objective based on your learning insights from the previous course work and assignments. This should be an area that you want to develop and will require you to stretch beyond your relative comfort level. (**Example: Effectively apply the skills of active listening with an education staff member regarding a change in scheduling for next year's courses. Effectiveness will be measured by the extent to which this staff person indicates they felt heard, respected, empowered and inspired about the change.**)

3. **ACTION STEPS:** Identify and sequence 3 to 10 specific action steps and activities that will take you to your learning objective.

4. **FEEDBACK:** What feedback from my peers, direct reports, and my superiors will tell me that I've been successful?

5. **DEBRIEF:** Reflecting on your learning objective, your implementation steps, and your measurement indicators, describe your overall learning experience from this activity. Use these questions as a guide.
- a. What aided and/or impeded the implementation (or practice) of your ALP?
 - b. From your perspective how successful were you in practicing and demonstrating your new leader behavior/action (Objective)?
 - c. If you were to do it again, what would you do differently? Keep on doing?
 - d. What is your forward plan for your newly learned leadership behavior?